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torial policy of the encyclopaedia is not non-committal, but that it is neither theologically nor scientifically sectarian. This estimate is confirmed by examination of articles in other fields. Perhaps the most striking case in point is the paper on "Chastity" by Mr. Alfred C. Crawley. To the sociologist a synthesis of the Ritschlian manner of thinking about religion and the type of objectivity represented by this survey is impossible. One or the other must in the end be normative. The article "Caves" by Mr. David MacRitchie weighs in the same scale, also "Children" (American) by Dr. A. F. Chamberlain, "Chartism," etc. One finds corroboration of the same estimate in the notable fitness of most of the writers to represent their subjects; although in many cases they are obviously not in theological agreement with the editor. Judging from this volume only, the work deserves the respect, not of an artificially selected public alone, but of scholars generally.

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POPULAR INTERPRETATION OF THE PENTATEUCH¹

Present-day discussions of the Old Testament presuppose a knowledge of the results of modern criticism. No work of any value on the Pentateuch disregards such information as that presented in Chapman's *An Introduction to the Pentateuch*. The problems of the Pentateuch are so numerous and complicated that the editors of the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* decided to devote to them a separate volume. We are still to remember, however, that the discussion is compressed into this one small book simply because it is treated from a popular point of view, otherwise, we should rightly expect and demand two or three volumes.

The title of the book should include Joshua, as does its discussion, for that book is involved in most of the documentary problems of the Pentateuch. Part I is a preliminary statement of facts, mainly on the history of the discussions of the Hexateuch and the problems which it presents to present-day readers. Part II is the part in which the great task is done.

¹ *An Introduction to the Pentateuch*. By A. T. Chapman. Cambridge: The University Press, 1911. xix+339 pages. \$1.00 net.

The Book of Exodus. By S. R. Driver. Cambridge: The University Press, 1911. lxxii+443 pages. \$1.00 net.

The Book of Numbers. By A. H. McNeile. Cambridge: The University Press, 1911. xxvii+196 pages. 75c net.

Three simple propositions are laid down as the basis of the discussion: (1) The Hexateuch contains passages of later date than the times of Moses and Joshua; (2) The Hexateuch is a composite work, in which four documents (at least) can be distinguished; (3) The laws contained in the Pentateuch consist of three separate codes which belong to different periods in the history of Israel. The first proposition requires but ten pages to prove its claim, while the arguments for the second and third are condensed into about sixty pages each. The author follows the accepted results, such as are embodied in Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, and other modern works. He marshals his material into a simple, orderly, and convincing form, plain enough for any layman who wishes to tackle these problems. The more technical linguistic and critical notes are relegated to the bottom of the pages or to one of the ten divisions of the Appendix.

The spirit and temper of the discussion are admirable. The form of argument, for example, in the story of the spies (pp. 86-97) is so clear and convincing that no further word need be said. Even the advanced student can gather inspiration and wise suggestion from the methods employed throughout the whole book.

This introductory volume relieves the commentaries on the separate books of the Hexateuch from a heavy charge on their space, and thus leaves them to do their own proper work.

Students of the Old Testament always congratulate themselves when they can secure the results of the work of Canon Driver. Though popular in form his volume on Exodus is not less scholarly than his more elaborate and technical books. The best contribution which he makes to a better understanding of Exodus is his wise use of the latest information on the history on Egypt. The section in the Introduction which discusses "the history of Egypt during the Israelites' sojourn in it," is a fine exhibition of the thorough manner in which the Canon uses the best sources of information. In addition to his references to certain customs throughout the commentary, he gives us four appendices of especial value on (1) the Passover, (2) the date of the Decalogue, (3) the Code of Hammurabi, and (4) the historical character of the Tent of Meeting. A few zinc etchings illustrate the text; and three good maps at the end of the volume help to localize events.

McNeile's *Exodus* in the "Westminster Commentaries" prepared us to appreciate his little commentary in the Cambridge Bible series on *Numbers*. The significant sections of the Introduction are those on the "Levites," "the historical value of the Book of Numbers," and "the

religious value of the Book of Numbers." The commentary is not arranged differently from others in the series, and the comments are marked by the same careful method of condensation and clearness found in the Exodus volume.

Both of these Cambridge Bible volumes—*Exodus* and *Numbers*—use the Revised Version, British edition, as the basal text. The exposition, of course, is based on the authors' personal knowledge of the Hebrew text.

These three volumes are a very useful addition to the popular understanding of the Pentateuch, on which there has been such a dearth of sane, up-to-date popular discussions.

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A COPTIC VERSION OF OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS¹

With the publication of the treasures of the British Museum going on apace, the Coptic translations of the Bible are coming into their own. Their value for the reconstruction of the Greek text has, of course, long been recognized. Their importance for the Septuagint text is, if anything, greater than that for the New Testament. While among New Testament translations the Coptic ranks, at best, third, i.e., after the Syriac and Latin, on the Old Testament side it will for the most part take precedence over the Syriac, at least. And yet for one of the most important of Coptic translations of the Septuagint, that in the Sahidic dialect, we have hitherto had to be content with a series of fragments widely scattered through different publications and often pitifully small. Under these circumstances one cannot but hail with delight so large and fine a contribution as that made by Sir Herbert Thompson in the volume under discussion.¹ Of this palimpsest, acquired by the Museum in 1847, only two pages had previously been published, viz., Plates VII. 1 and LVI. 1 in Hyvernat's *Album de paléographie copte* (Paris, 1888, pp. 13, 18). Now the difficult under writing has with infinite pains been made to yield up 272 pages of 50 short half-lines each.

As a publication of a manuscript pure and simple this book ranks, so far as we can judge, with the best that modern science is doing. The beautifully clear print and the general typographical execution leaves

¹ *A Coptic Palimpsest Containing Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Judith and Esther in the Sahidic Dialect*. Edited by Sir Herbert Thompson. London: Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1911. xii+368 pages. 21s net.